

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 590

Expressing grave concerns about the sweeping censorship, privacy, and cybersecurity implications of China's Green Dam filtering software, and urging U.S. high-tech companies to promote the Internet as a tool for transparency, freedom of expression, and citizen empowerment around the world.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 26, 2009

Mr. WU (for himself and Mr. WOLF) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing grave concerns about the sweeping censorship, privacy, and cybersecurity implications of China's Green Dam filtering software, and urging U.S. high-tech companies to promote the Internet as a tool for transparency, freedom of expression, and citizen empowerment around the world.

Whereas, on May 19, 2009, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People's Republic of China issued a broad directive requiring all personal computers sold in China to have preinstalled filtering software, called Green Dam Youth Escort, starting July 1, 2009;

Whereas online surveillance researchers assert that Green Dam has the ability to block political and religious con-

tent and allow the Chinese government to monitor Internet use and collect personal information;

Whereas in a report published on June 12, 2009, the OpenNet Initiative, a joint project by the University of Toronto and Harvard, Cambridge, and Oxford universities, found that the software hampers a computer's performance by shutting down Web browsers and applications without warning, in addition to creating serious security problems;

Whereas, a June 15, 2009, report by the OpenNet Initiative states, "As a computing tool Green Dam is far more powerful than the centralized filtering system China currently implements. It actively monitors individual computer behavior to the extent that its 'language processing' tool can institute extremely intrusive 'kill' action on sites if the content algorithm detects 'inappropriate' sensitive political or religious speech";

Whereas Green Dam has already been downloaded more than 3.2 million times, including downloads by thousands of schools that were required to install the software by the end of May 2009;

Whereas China is home to 298 million Internet users, the largest population of Internet users in the world;

Whereas in testimony before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission on June 18, 2009, Daniel Calingaert, deputy director of programs at Freedom House, said, "The response to the introduction of Green Dam censorship software in China provides just the most recent example of citizens using the Internet to stand up to repressive regimes. Numerous experts in China tested the software, and word about its harmful effects spread rapidly online.

Ordinary citizens voiced strong objections to the software and used social networking tools to organize online protests against the Green Dam”;

Whereas, on June 9, 2009, the Information Technology Industry Council, the Software & Information Industry Association, the Telecommunications Industry Association, and TechAmerica issued the following joint statement: “[We] urge the Chinese government to reconsider implementing its new mandatory filtering software requirement and would welcome the opportunity for a meaningful dialogue. We believe there should be an open and healthy dialogue on how parental control software can be offered in the market in ways that ensure privacy, system reliability, freedom of expression, the free flow of information, security and user choice”; and

Whereas, on June 24, 2009, Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke and United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk sent joint letters to China’s Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and China’s Ministry of Commerce, raising objections to Green Dam and expressing concerns that the Chinese government’s directive may violate China’s commitments under the World Trade Organization: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) expresses grave concerns about the sweep-
- 3 ing censorship, privacy, and cybersecurity implica-
- 4 tions of the Green Dam filtering software;
- 5 (2) calls on the government of the People’s Re-
- 6 public of China to rescind its requirement for Green
- 7 Dam to be preinstalled on all new computers;

1 (3) expresses unyielding support for the people
2 of China in their quest for Internet freedom and free
3 expression; and

4 (4) urges U.S. high-tech companies to promote
5 the Internet as a tool for transparency, freedom of
6 expression, and citizen empowerment around the
7 world.

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